

**EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES**

Meeting of February 3, 2010

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Members Present: Bill Strassberger (Chair); Marva Deskins (Vice Chair); Eric G. Luedtke (Parliamentarian); Thomas J. Aylward; Kim Bobola, Ph.D.; Amjad M. Chaudhry, G. Stanley Doore; David M. Kochanski, Esq.; Peter Myo Khin; Allan Mulligan; Alfreda H. Payne, Ph.D.; Odessa Shannon; Saschane M. Stephenson; Benoy Thomas, Vanessa E. Ali

Members Absent: Anthony Ramirez (Secretary)

Staff: Joy Nurmi, (Director); Chuck Crisostomo (Asst. Director) and Chris Briggs (PAA, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center)

Guests: Mara Parker (Staff, Councilmember Marc Elrich's office); Pam Saul (Staff, Sen. Rona Kramer; District 14, Montgomery County); Naomi Bloch (Staff, Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg's office); Kristin O'Connor (Senior Planner, M-NCPPC); Tom McNamara (President, GCCA); Jennifer Wright (Burtonsville PTA); Mark Pharaoh (ECRAB); Mark Doore (Resident); Chris Bradbury (Resident); Lucretia Bartley (President, HOA, Greencastle Manor II); Jeanette Der Bedrosian (Gazette reporter).

Chair Strassberger welcomed everyone to the board meeting.

Citizen's Forum: Asked the guests to introduce themselves and share their concerns with the board. The floor was opened for questions.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:25 p.m.

Chair Strassberger – announced presentations by Jim Stowe, Department of Human Rights, Roylene Roberts, Department of Housing and Community Affairs-Burtonsville Revitalization, Joy Patil, Third District, Department of Police Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

Speakers

1. Roylene Roberts, Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA): spoke on the Burtonsville Revitalization. Roylene distributed copies of the County Executives CIP document which detailed this item.

She informed the ECCAB that the County Executive has included funding in his CIP proposal: \$945,000 is earmarked for FY11 and \$1,080,000 is earmarked for FY12. Roylene cautioned that this is a budget proposal and is awaiting County Council approval. The proposal is to support the business community and increase investment potential through gateway signage, façade improvements and pedestrian lighting.

Cathy Mahmud was introduced as the project manager who will work directly with the community.

In the current year, DHCA has done research and interviews with business and property owners and will also be using the services of a consultant before the end of FYI 2010 concerning the designs elements to be implemented in FY11.

Roylene was asked if property owners are required to participate and indicated that no property owner can be forced to participate. The county has offered to purchase façade easements and if property owners take advantage then they will be responsible for maintaining it. Property owners are not paid until work of façade is complete and inspected.

Kim Bobola thanked Roylene and her group for the work they are doing with the Burtonsville community.

2. Jim Stowe, Department of Human Rights (DOHR)

Jim told the ECCAB committee that DOHR's major charge is to investigate alleged discrimination primarily in the areas of housing, employment or public accommodations.

He described the County's demographics as 1 million residents for which there are 130 countries represented. With a \$68,000 minimum income necessary to live in Montgomery County for a family of four, life can be challenging for many new residents.

DOHR is located on the first floor of the Rockville Public Library. Their primary task is to investigate claims of discrimination in Montgomery County. They work with all parties involved in a neutral manner. The Department attempts to determine if discrimination took place and NOT to assign guilt. Facts must support accusations.

DOHR works on making sure residents do not experience impeded access to County services due to language barriers. The department is also dedicated to improving customer service. DOHR attempts to be the first and last contact for county residents.

3. Joy Patil from Montgomery County Police, Third District.

Officer Patil presented a program she promotes in the community entitled "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)." She explained that this is a crime prevention program that focuses on the building/landscaping design process as an important component to physical security.

Design phase – MCPD can give input from a law enforcement point of view on security issues, landscaping, etc during this phase. Though CPTED input is not required for businesses under construction, it is highly recommended. The kinds of input include:

1. Natural Surveillance – Ease of view from outside/streetside – limiting shrub height to 2 to 3 ft. Limiting tree heights on property and limiting obstructive signage in store windows.
2. Access Control – parking lot placement vs. entryway convenience.
3. Territoriality – Neighborhood Watch signs and Community signs help designate boundaries. Tot lots should be placed out in the open. Thorn bushes can be used to prevent trespassing. Parking signs and community use are recommended.

Joy offered to do CPTED reviews and assessments of cash handling procedures and other issues facing homeowners or businesses. Reports are free, however if recommendations made by CPTED are ignored and litigation occurs owner may be open to liability.

Chair Strassberger – Thanked the Speakers for their presentations.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Strassberger asked for a review of the minutes of the ECCAB Meeting of December 2nd 2009.

[January 6th 2010-1] A motion was made to approve the minutes of January 6th, 2009.

The motion was moved by Eric Luedtke; seconded by Tom Aylward and unanimously approved.

Director's Report – Joy Nurmi

Joy thanked everyone on the board who participated in the MLK AFI event. Due to time constraints she asked for any questions on her written report to be emailed to her.

Chair's Report – Bill Strassberger

The Chair sent out copies of recommendations for the FYI 11 CIP Budget. He invited ECCAB and community members to the County Council public hearing at 7 p.m. on Feb 9th, where he will present the ECCAB testimony.

On Feb 23rd, the Chair and Vice Chair will present the Board's priorities to the County Executive for the upcoming year. The meeting starts at 9 p.m.

Council Report:

Miti Figueredo, Nancy Navarro's Office -Chief of staff, Miti Figueredo, passed out Councilmember Navarro's most recent newsletter. She also mentioned that Ms. Navarro is working in support of the new Life Sciences zone. She stated that the councilmember is interested in updating the Route 29 mobility and land use master plan without derailing other master plans already scheduled.

Councilmember Navarro is also proposing that Burtonsville Crossing Giant grocery store space be considered for use as satellite campus of Montgomery College.

She also distributed a letter Ms Navarro has sent to MNCPPC Chairman Royce Hanson regarding resident concerns about the proposed Police station at the "Milestone" site. At issue in the letter are the concerns of the community regarding the buffer zones surrounding the new police station along with requirements for on-site reforestation.

The other letter distributed is about code enforcement legislation, and urges the PHED committee to bring the proposed bills to the full Council for its consideration.

Mara Parker, Councilmember Elrich office – Mentioned the Fairfax report, which compares the services from Fairfax County to those of Montgomery County.

Ms Figueredo also reported that just prior to the ECCAB meeting the Council had proposed to not eliminate any Ride On bus routes as a part of the mid-year Savings Plan, but to make up this revenue through increased fares and county parking fines.

Committee Reports

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee: Tom Aylward, Chair

Re: Board priorities:

1. Efficient and effective transportation network,
2. Safe streets and secure neighborhoods
3. Strong and vital economy

Services Committee: Kim Bobola on behalf of Anthony Ramirez, Chair

Re: Board priorities:

1. Education – Additions at Jackson Road Elementary and the Paint Branch Renovation.
1. Public Safety – Committee would like to support a new Fire Station construction and IDA sector meetings with community.

Outreach Committee: Amjad M. Chaudhry, Chair

Amjad Chaudhry indicated that the committee was not longer planning the student Art Show.

The Committee will instead try to work with non-profit groups such as the C4, EMEAN.

Fredda Payne reported having attended the Northeast consortium meeting and the demo of new technology boards that are being beta tested in several schools.

Marva Deskins also indicated that Public Safety and Education should also be identified as priorities of the Outreach Committee as well. In addition they would like working with the Recreation Dept. to create programs for community youth.

Old Business: None

New Business – Thomas J. Aylward presented a draft letter, referencing the Gaithersburg West plan and the needs of the East County for similar consideration. In this regard the letter requests action on an amendment to the White Oak Master Plan to encourage the designation of a Life Sciences Center zone. Tom asked the board to review the letter and will attempt to get it out under the Chair's name by the March meeting. The Chair considered this motion and referred the matter to the Economic Development Committee to finalize and present a final draft at the March 2010 Board meeting.

Peter Myo Khin asked if the Board could focus on the Colesville sector of the Cloverly master plan. MNCPPC will be asked to do a presentation at the next Economic Development Committee meeting.

Marva Deskins inquired about a rescheduling of the FDA tour. Joy Nurmi said we would work on this item with a schedule in April 2010.

Announcements - G. Stanley Doore - talked about the Laptop Learning in the Country. Stan expressed concern about the proposal for Montgomery College to add a campus in the Burtonsville Crossing Shopping center.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40p.m. **The next meeting of ECCAB is scheduled for March 3rd, 2010.**

ATTACHMENT (emailed to Members)

Director's Report – February 2010

MLK Day on January 18th

Kudos and thanks for the ECCAB members who helped out! Bill Strassberger, Marva Deskins, Kim Bobola, Alfreda Payne, Peter Myo Khin, Odessa Shannon, Amjad Chaudhry, Benoy Thomas.

From a quick head count, approximately 500-550 people attended, and we handed out about that many bags that contained the giveaways, literature from the non-profit organizations, information on the EC and SS Regional Services Centers and census information (what a great opportunity to get the word out on the census!). Eight non-profits participated. We had a lot of theatre-goers stop by and talk to the non-profits. We plan to close the loop with our non-profit partners to gauge how useful they felt the event was to them (recruitment of volunteers and donations). AFI was a wonderful partner and we were able to make an announcement at each movie showing about the non-profits and the Regional Service Centers.

IDA Sector

We had an extremely productive meeting on January 21st. The agenda included: Lt. Steve D'Ovidio, Third District Police, who gave an update on recent crime trends in the IDA sector, Mike Durso, Member, Board of Education on public safety in schools, Officer Huggins, the Facility Officer at Paint Branch HS, who talked about school safety and gangs, and Julie Tucker, who informed the group about CSAFE, a State initiative with funding to supplement the County's efforts. The next IDA Sector meeting is March 11 at 7 p.m. Location to be determined.

MD 650 and Quaint Acres Drive Stoplight

An accident occurred near this intersection very recently in which an 11-year old pedestrian who lives in the Quaint Acres subdivision, was struck by a vehicle while he was waiting at the signal on his way to school. Fortunately, the child sustained minor injuries, but the incident amplifies the need for a fully functioning stoplight at this location.

In August, the County's consultant at Dewberry submitted a traffic study to SHA asking them to approve a full service traffic light at the above intersection. In October, Dewberry received a response from the State Highway Administration (SHA) asking for an additional study that would further assess traffic conditions both with and without a median closure at the MD 650 at Milestone Drive intersection.

Because the County felt that its traffic study showed that a traffic light was warranted, it asked SHA to approve the traffic light based on the study without considering the median closure. However, SHA recently sent a response to the County, which again asks for further study.

The County plans to proceed with the additional study requested by SHA. We will notify the community when we receive SHA's final decision.

Meet the Author Program to be Held at Praisner Library

New York Times best-selling author Connie Briscoe will read from her latest book, "Sisters and Husbands," at the Marilyn J. Praisner Library on February 6 at 2 p.m. The library is located at 14910 Old

Columbia Pike in Burtonsville.

Ms. Briscoe is the author of five best-selling novels about black women's lives and loves. Her other novels include "Sisters and Lovers," "Big Girls Don't Cry," "P.G. County," "Can't Get Enough" and "Jewels: 50 Phenomenal Black Women Over 50."

County Senior Nutrition Program Offers Free Nutrition Hotline

Seniors and their caregivers can get diet and nutrition questions answered by a registered dietitian by calling the County's free Senior Nutrition Hotline at 240-777-1100. The service is available Wednesday mornings from 9 to 11 a.m.

Information is available on topics such as how to lower sodium intake, how to find reliable nutrition information on the Internet and how to choose the healthiest cooking oil. Bilingual assistance is also available.